

REMARKS

Clarifying amendments have been made to independent claims 1 and 38. Claims 1, 3-23 and 33-42 remain pending in the application.

The Examiner is thanked for indicating that claims 33-37 are allowed and that objected to claims 5, 14 and 15 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of a base claim and any intervening claims.

It is believed that this amendment places this application in condition for allowance, and therefore entry of this amendment is seen to be proper at this after-final stage. Favorable action is respectfully requested.

Claim Rejections 35 USC 102

Claims 1, 3-4, 6-9, 11-13, 16-23 and 38-42 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Schmidt (U.S. 4,705,473). Reconsideration and withdrawal of these rejections is requested in view of amended claims 1 and 38 and for the following reasons.

It is noted that in the final paragraph of section 16 of the Final Office Action mailed April 3, 2007, the Examiner has indicated that "...the block of Schmidt, has in it, a junction component and a pipe fixed in the manifold block. As written, claim 1 does not clearly define a manifold comprised of separate pieces put together, wherein the manifold is cast around the pieces." Although applicant does not agree with the Examiner that the prior wording of claim 1 (and claim 38) was not sufficient to distinguish over Schmidt, in order to expedite prosecution of the application, claim 1 has now been amended to even more clearly specify differences between the claimed subject matter and Schmidt by including in claim 1 the statement that the junction component and the at least one pipe are separate pieces that the manifold block has been cast around. Such a feature is not present in Schmidt. This amendment is clearly supported in the specification as originally filed, including for example paragraph [0032].

Thus, amended claim 1 is now directed to an injection molding apparatus that comprises, among other things, a manifold that includes the following three elements: (i) a cast manifold block; (ii) a junction component fixed in the manifold block and having an axial bore with a first end opening to an exterior surface of said manifold block, and at least one radial bore in fluid communication with the axial bore and having at least one opening to an outer surface of said junction component, and (iii) at least one pipe fixed in the manifold block, wherein said at least one pipe has a first end that engages the junction component at the opening of the radial bore, the junction component and the at least one pipe defining a manifold channel, and the junction component and the at least one pipe are separate pieces that the manifold block has been cast around.

Turning to independent claim 38, such claim has been amended in a manner similar to claim 1 to more clearly distinguish over Schmidt by adding the statement that the junction component, the at least one pipe, and the at least one support pillar are separate pieces that the manifold block has been cast around.

Accordingly, Applicant submits that Schmidt does not disclose all the elements of amended claim 1 and claim 38, and applicant submits that claim 1 is novel and patentable over Schmidt. Claims 3-23 that depend from claim 1, and claims 39-42 that depend from claim 38 add further novel features and are novel and patentable over Schmidt for at least the same reasons as claims 1 and 38 respectively.

Claim Rejections 35 USC 103

The Examiner has rejected claim 10 under 35 U.S.C.103 (a) as being unpatentable over Schmidt in view of Yu (U.S. 6,544,027). Reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection is requested for the following reason.

As indicated above, independent claim 1 is novel and patentable over Schmidt. It is submitted that Yu does not disclose any features that would affect the patentability of claim 1, and accordingly claim 10 which depends from claim 1 is patentable for at least the same reasons as claim 1.

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Conclusion

In view of the foregoing remarks, this Application should be in condition for allowance. A Notice to this affect is respectfully requested. If the Examiner believes, after this Response, that the Application is not in condition for allowance, the Examiner is respectfully requested to call the Applicants' Representative at the number below.

Applicants hereby petition for any extension of time which is required to maintain the pendency of this case. If there is a fee occasioned by this response, including an extension fee, that is not covered by an enclosed check, please charge any deficiency to Deposit Account No. 50-3661.

If the enclosed papers or fees are considered incomplete, the Patent Office is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned collect at (508) 616-2900, in Westborough, Massachusetts.

Respectfully submitted,



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